Increase in Cotton Procurement Prices

2107. DR. BAPU KALDATE: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that cotton prices have been continuously falling;

(b) whether the cotton growers have urged Government to enhance the procurement price;

(c) whether Government have created a buffer stock of 2 lakh bales of short and medium staple varieties through imports; and

(d) if so, what are the reasons for this import?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) In recent months, cotton prices at different centres have shown a mixed trend. However, due to bumper crop, cotton prices during 1984-85 are lower compared to the high prices prevailing during 1983-84 when the cotton production was low.

(b) So far the Government have not received any request either from cotton growers or their association regarding enhancement in the support prices of cotton.

(c) and (d) Keeping in view the demand-supply situation of different varieties of cotton, Government decided to import one lakh bales of short and medium varieties of cotton through Cotton Corporation of India on National Textile Corporation's account in order to stabilise prices.

Exemption of Family Pension Scheme Prevailing in FCI—NFL Group of Companies

2108. SHRI O. J. JOSEPH : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the family pension scheme was already in operation in the F.C.I.—N.F.L. group of Companies when Government sponsored Family Pension Scheme in 1971;

(b) whether Government have received any representation for exempting them from Government sponsored scheme and allow them to opt for company pension scheme; and

(c) if so, the decision Government have taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI T. ANJAIAH): (a) A Family Pension Scheme of their own prior to the introduction of the Employees' Family Pension Scheme, 1971.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The matter is under consideration.

Long-term Measures for Drought hit areas in Orissa

2109. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR SAHU : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) what measures Government have taken to meet the situation in drought hit Orissa; and

(b) what are the long-term measures that Government propose to take to save people of drought affected areas in that State?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR): (a) A Memorandum seeking Central assistance was received from the Government of Orissa in January, 1985 for tackling the drought in that State. A ceiling of Rs. 8.95 crores was sanctioned on 1-4-1985 for drought relief measures in the State.

(b) The Government have undertaken a number of long-term measures for tackling drought in a number of States including Orissa. Some of them are mentioned below:—

(1) Increasing the irrigated areas in the country;

(2) Drought Prone Area Programme;